
Letters

LUNCH WITH MARY LOUISE MARSHALL

To the Editor:

On Friday, July 20, Ann Hodge Macomber and I had lunch with Mary Louise Marshall. Joining us for this special reunion was Nancy Hall Keller, one of her first interns. We met to celebrate the eighty-sixth birthday of Miss Marshall, and to inform her of the MLA Board of Directors' decision to name a session at the 1980 annual meeting in her honor. It was such a joyous occasion for all of us, I was compelled to share it with all of MLA and particularly her colleagues who have had the opportunity of knowing her.

For those youngsters who are not familiar with the name, let me present a brief resume: Emeritus Librarian and Emeritus Professor of Medical Bibliography of Tulane University School of Medicine; treasurer of MLA, 1930-1937, and president, 1941-1946. She has served on numerous committees and written extensively, including her chapter on classification in the first edition of the *Handbook of Medical Library Practice* and much more.

Before this begins to sound like a memorial, let me emphasize Mary Louise is alive and well and vibrant. Since her retirement she has been enjoying her second love—genealogy—and has been actively involved in local and national programs and projects.

The luncheon was wonderful—excellent food and conversation. The three of us listened to many of her fascinating experiences as a medical librarian. It was members like this that made our association what it is.

Plans now are to get together from time to time over some cheese and wine perhaps and reminisce. Wish you could be with us.

We are proud of the contributions of our local MLAer—Mary Louise Marshall.

JOHN P. ISCHE
New Orleans, Louisiana

LIBRARIAN-DEAN COMMUNICATION IN HALLWAYS

To the Editor:

The management peripheries of library science have developed statistical analyses for practically every aspect of librarianship. But no formulae yet

exist to calculate the success rate by which the medical school librarian communicates with the dean while they pass each other in the hallway.

Despite the growing tendency of deans to avoid meeting librarians anywhere but in the corridors, there is a lack of hard data on the efficacy of such encounters. While Robert Cheshier estimates a maximum communication interval of eight seconds, allowing for the inevitable Doppler effect, this observation lacks requisite statistical trappings, limiting its applicability to the personalities involved.* To rectify this, I advance the first in an evolving series of formulae for those wishing to calculate their own success rate.

The basic equation is: $S = M/D + L$ where S is the success rate, D + L the dean's and librarian's speeds in cm./sec., and M is the duration of the message in seconds. Assumptions here include: the librarian's voice carries at least ten meters, both parties approach at a constant speed, and the dean is unaccompanied.

Future formulae will address such problems as variable rates of speed (deans have been observed to accelerate/decelerate in response to such verbal stimuli as *money*, *curriculum committee*, etc.), hallway intersections, and the devious librarian who, seeing the dean approach, begins walking backward until their paces match. Another series of equations, which I envisage as eventually becoming an independent discipline, will consider the effects of doorways in the corridors. Not planned at this time is an exploration of the hallway encounter wherein the success rate is grossly distorted through the librarian's unconscious proffering of specific favors, implied, sexual, or bibliographic.

PATRICK J. FAWCETT
Winnipeg, Manitoba

*Robert Cheshier, Cleveland Health Sciences Library, Cleveland, Ohio. Unguarded remarks while teaching CE 44, Ottawa, June 1979.

NATIONAL PERIODICALS CENTER

To the Editor:

At the annual meeting of the MLA in Honolulu, several librarians brought up the question of whether or not publishers were in favor of or against the establishment of the National Periodi-